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MAYOR KISS'S STATEMENT ON PROPOSAL TO SELL BED

Burlington, VT. Kurt Wright's proposal to sell the Burlington Electric Department is short-sighted and irresponsible. BED is a tremendous asset of the City. As a municipally-owned utility, it reflects important values of local rate-payer control and public accountability. BED is widely-acknowledged as one of the nation's leading utilities with respect to the use of renewable energy sources. Selling an asset like BED for a one-time benefit undercuts Burlington's future. It's a short-term gimmick that lacks prudence and vision.

The urgency suggested by this proposal is misplaced. The City is working towards constructive solutions for issues such as Burlington Telecom and the pension fund. Despite the national economy Burlington has been successful in attracting new businesses and jobs, strengthening the City's infrastructure, and building sustainable municipal budgets that have continued to deliver quality services without the need for a general city tax increase over the last 6 years. Proposing to sell BED under these circumstances is an erratic solution to circumstances that require steadiness and careful consideration.